Fr Schaden--124 F-4, 5 (1948-1954) 1962 SM4 Guarani SM4

/101 cont./

624 156 [577] In order to be considered competent, or in order to gain prestige among his subjects, the capitão should be energetic, have persuasive power over his comrades, not be given to drunkenness, speak the national idiom, and be skilled and astute in dealing with the Brazilian authorities. Among the Nandéva of Itariri I heard complaints against old Silvino Xafino, whose incapacity was attributed to the "lack of agreement" in the village: he was said not to have the energy or sufficient persuasive power to gather the men to maintain the village road. They accused him of excessive alcoholism, which gave the community a bad name. "Mburuvixá naiporãi, the chief is no good because he drinks a great deal, and his wife too."

622 756 • 555 In the social structure there is no formal obstacle blocking the access of anyone to either the category of prayer-man or doctor-sorcerer. The status stems from the religious experience of the individual himself, and there is no limitation to the number of doctor-sorcerers. Strictly speaking, every chief of a great-family, or even of an elementary family, can become the doctor-sorcerer of his kindred, so long as he has the vocation for such. Nothing hinders a family from splitting in two, each with its ñanderu, which, incidentally, shows the close relation between the chieftaincy of the family group and the charismatic authority. There is almost no danger of any rivalry among the doctor-sorcerers of a village: the authority of each one goes beyond the ambit of the family group only to that extent that his prestige allows it. His power does not rest on a patent conferred by an official of the Serviço de Proteção aos Índios, but on his religious knowledge, on his ability to foresee the future, in the exercise of practices that drive away misfortunes of the present and prevent those of the future. That is why Pedro Pires said to me: "Mbaekuaá is the prayer-man, for he knows everything."

624 648 177 The situation of the village capitão is quite different. The institution did not originate from within Guaraní culture; it was imposed from outside. Even so, however, nowadays important functions in the life of the group fall to him. The capitão